



Name: _____

Date: _____

BEFORE READING

page 694

The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street

A Screenplay by Rod Serling

ABOUT THE STORY

Maple Street is an ordinary street in the American suburbs. However, when something in the sky flashes overhead, machines and electronics stop working. As the residents try to figure out is happening, they begin to suspect one another. Read about what happens in **“The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street.”**

MAKE CONNECTIONS

Think about a time you made a hasty decision. What happened when you jumped to conclusions?

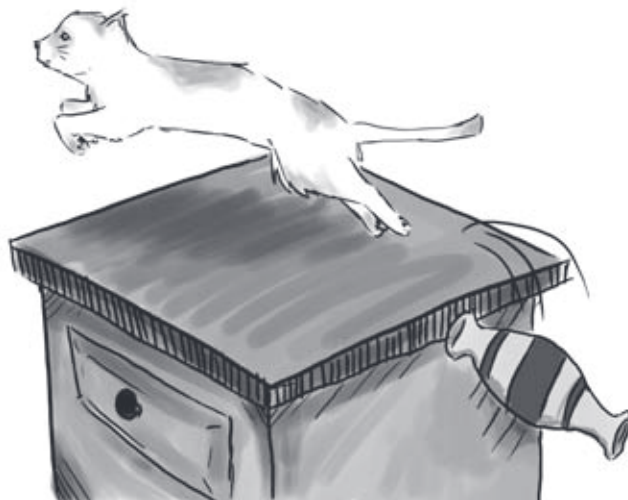
ANALYZE LITERATURE: Diction

The author’s choice of words is known as **diction**. An author’s diction may be formal or informal, simple or ornate, old-fashioned or modern. To help you determine the diction of this screenplay, write down words and phrases that suggest a specific type of diction.

USE READING SKILLS: Analyze Cause and Effect

As you read a dramatic script, identify cause-and-effect relationships created by stage directions, dialogue, and characters' actions. Determine the reasons, or **causes**, something exists or occurs, as well as the results, or **effects**. Record your ideas in the chart below.

Cause	Effect
There was a flash overhead	All of the technology on the street stopped working



PREVIEW VOCABULARY

Key Words and Phrases Read each key word and rate it using this scale: ① I don't know this word or phrase at all. ② I've seen this word or phrase before. ③ I know this word or phrase and use it.	Words and Phrases in Context Read to see how the key word or phrase can be used in a sentence.	Definition Write down what you think the word or phrase means. Then use a dictionary to check your definition.	Practice Practice using the key words and phrases by completing the following sentences.
nebulae neb • u • lae (neb ü lī) <i>noun</i> ① ② ③	The visible nebulae were a blue mist of stars in the sky.		The nebulae in outer space might look...
metamorphosis me • ta • mor • pho • sis (me ta môr phō sis) <i>noun</i> ① ② ③	The mob went through a metamorphosis and stopped fighting when they realized the power was back on.		One animal that might go through a metamorphosis is...
knits his brows <i>idiom</i> ① ② ③	Alex always knits his brows when he is trying to solve a difficult puzzle.		A person might knits his brows if...
bum jokes <i>idiom</i> ① ② ③	My parents bought a new car when our old car started playing bum jokes and wouldn't start.		People don't like bum jokes because...
scapegoat scape • goat (skāp' gōt) <i>noun</i> ① ② ③	When my sister lost her homework, she used me as a scapegoat . She claimed that I put it in the wrong backpack!		Someone would look for a scapegoat if...

The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street

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CHARACTERS

NARRATOR

FIGURE ONE

FIGURE TWO

5 RESIDENTS OF MAPLE STREET

STEVE BRAND

CHARLIE'S WIFE

MRS. GOODMAN

MRS. BRAND

10 TOMMY

WOMAN

DON MARTIN

SALLY (*Tommy's Mother*)

MAN ONE

15 MAN TWO

PETE VAN HORN

CHARLIE

LES GOODMAN

— ACT 1 —

20 *Fade in on a shot of the night sky. The various nebulae and planet bodies stand out in sharp, sparkling relief, and the camera begins a slow pan across the Heavens.*

NARRATOR'S VOICE. There is a fifth dimension beyond that which is known to man. It is a dimension as vast as space,
25 and as timeless as infinity. It is the middle ground between light and shadow—between science and superstition. And it lies between the pit of man's fears and the summit of his knowledge. This is the dimension of imagination. It is an area which we call The Twilight Zone.

30 *The camera has begun to pan down until it passes the horizon and is on a sign which reads "Maple Street." Pan down*

DURING READING

Build Vocabulary

When you *pan across* something, you slowly shift the view from one place to another. Why would you *pan across* the night sky before starting a television show?

Build Vocabulary

A *dimension* is a place in time and space, and is often associated with a sense of reality. Something that might seem like it cannot happen in this dimension could be said to happen in another dimension. How does knowing that there is a fifth dimension that people don't understand help set up the story in this screenplay?

Culture Note

The Twilight Zone was a popular television show that ran from 1959 to 1964. Each episode was a unique mixture of science fiction, horror, suspense, and surrealism. Today, the expression "the twilight zone" often refers to something that is surreal or strange.

DURING READING

Think and Reflect

The narrator says that monsters will be coming to Maple Street. What do you think the monsters will be like?

until we are shooting down at an angle toward the street below. It's a tree-lined, quiet residential American street, very typical of the small town. The houses have front porches on which people sit and swing on gliders, conversing across from house to house. Steve Brand polishes his car parked in front of his house. His neighbor, DON MARTIN, leans against the fender watching him. A Good Humor man rides a bicycle and is just in the process of stopping to sell some ice cream to a couple of kids. Two women gossip on the front lawn. Another man waters his lawn.

NARRATOR'S VOICE. Maple Street, U.S.A., late summer. A tree-lined little world of front porch gliders, hop scotch, the laughter of children, and the bell of an ice cream vendor.

There is a pause and the camera moves over to a shot of the Good Humor man and two small boys who are standing alongside, just buying ice cream.

NARRATOR'S VOICE. At the sound of the roar and the flash of light it will be precisely 6:43 P.M. on Maple Street.



At this moment one of the little boys, TOMMY, looks up to listen to a sound of a tremendous screeching roar from overhead. A flash of light plays on both their faces and then it moves down the street past lawns and porches and rooftops and then disappears.

Various people leave their porches and stop what they're doing to stare up at the sky. STEVE BRAND, the man who's been polishing his car, now stands there transfixed, staring upwards. He looks at DON MARTIN, his neighbor from across the street.

STEVE. What was that? A meteor?

DON. [Nods.] That's what it looked like. I didn't hear any crash though, did you?

STEVE. [Shakes his head.] Nope. I didn't hear anything except a roar.

MRS. BRAND. [From her porch.] Steve? What was what?

STEVE. [Raising his voice and looking toward porch.] Guess it was a meteor, honey. Came awful close, didn't it?

65 **MRS. BRAND.** Too close for my money! Much too close.
The camera pans across the various porches to people who stand there watching and talking in low tones.

NARRATOR'S VOICE. Maple Street. Six-forty-four P.M. on a late September evening. [A pause.] Maple Street in the last calm
 70 and reflective moment...before the monsters came!

The camera slowly pans across the porches again. We see a man screwing a light bulb on a front porch, then getting down off the stool to flick the switch and finding that nothing happens.

Another man is working on an electric power mower. He
 75 *plugs in the plug, flicks on the switch of the power mower, off and on, with nothing happening.*

Through the window of a front porch, we see a woman pushing her finger back and forth on the dial hook. Her voice is indistinct and distant, but intelligible and repetitive.

80 **WOMAN.** Operator, operator, something's wrong on the phone, operator!

MRS. BRAND comes out on the porch and calls to STEVE.

MRS. BRAND. [Calling.] Steve, the power's off. I had the soup on the stove and the stove just stopped working.

85 **WOMAN.** Same thing over here. I can't get anybody on the phone either. The phone seems to be dead.

We look down on the street as we hear the voices creep up from below, small, mildly disturbed voices highlighting these kinds of phrases:

90 **VOICES.**

Electricity's off.

Phone won't work.

Can't get a thing on the radio.

My power mower won't move, won't work at all.

95 Radio's gone dead!

PETE VAN HORN, a tall, thin man, is seen standing in front of his house.

VAN HORN. I'll cut through the back yard...See if the power's still on on Floral Street. I'll be right back!

100 *He walks past the side of his house and disappears into the back yard.*

The camera pans down slowly until we're looking at ten or eleven people standing around the street and overflowing to the curb and sidewalk. In the background is STEVE BRAND's car.

105 **STEVE.** Doesn't make sense. Why should the power go off all of a sudden, and the phone line?

DON. Maybe some sort of an electrical storm or something.

Note the Facts

What time does the flash go overhead?

Use Reading Skills

Analyze Cause and Effect

What are some of the effects of the strange flash of light?

Record your answers in your cause-and-effect chart.

Analyze Literature

Diction List words and phrases that indicate what kind of diction the author uses.



CHARLIE. That don't seem likely. Sky's just as blue as anything. Not a cloud. No lightning. No thunder. No nothing.
110 How could it be a storm?

WOMAN. I can't get a thing on the radio. Not even the portable.

The people again murmur softly in wonderment and question.

CHARLIE. Well, why don't you go downtown and check
115 with the police, though they'll probably think we're crazy or something. A little power failure and right away we get all flustered and everything.

STEVE. It isn't just the power failure, Charlie. If it was, we'd still be able to get a broadcast on the portable.

120 *There's a murmur of reaction to this. STEVE looks from face to face and then over to his car.*

STEVE. I'll run downtown. We'll get this all straightened out.
He walks over to the car, gets in it, turns the key. Looking through the open car door, we see the crowd watching him from
125 *the other side. STEVE starts the engine. It turns over sluggishly¹ and then just stops dead. He tries it again and this time he can't get it to turn over. Then, very slowly and reflectively, he turns the key back to "off" and slowly gets out of the car.*

The people stare at STEVE. He stands for a moment by the car,
130 *then walks toward the group.*

STEVE. I don't understand it. It was working fine before...

Don. Out of gas?

STEVE. [*Shakes his head.*] I just had it filled up.

WOMAN. What's it mean?

135 **Charlie.** It's just as if...as if everything had stopped.
[*Then he turns toward STEVE.*] We'd better walk downtown.
[*Another murmur of assent² at this.*]

1. **sluggishly.** Inactively; slowly moving

2. **assent.** Agreement

STEVE. The two of us can go, Charlie. [*He turns to look back at the car.*] It couldn't be the meteor. A meteor couldn't do this.

Think and Reflect

The people of Maple Street are surprised that their telephones, electricity, lawn mowers, stoves, and other machines stop working. How would you react if this happened on your street?

140 He and CHARLIE exchange a look, then they start to walk away from the group.

We see TOMMY, a serious-faced fourteen-year-old in spectacles who stands a few feet away from the group. He is halfway between them and the two men, who start to walk down the sidewalk.

145 **TOMMY.** Mr. Brand...you better not!

STEVE. Why not?

TOMMY. They don't want you to.

STEVE and CHARLIE exchange a grin, and STEVE looks back toward the boy.

150 **STEVE.** Who doesn't want us to?

TOMMY. [*Jerks his head in the general direction of the distant horizon.*] Them!

STEVE. Them?

Charlie. Who are them?

155 **TOMMY.** [*Very intently.*] Whoever was in that thing that came by overhead.

Steve knits his brows for a moment, cocking his head questioningly. His voice is intense.

STEVE. What?

160 **TOMMY.** Whoever was in that thing that came over. I don't think they want us to leave here.

STEVE leaves CHARLIE and walks over to the boy. He kneels down in front of him. He forces his voice to remain gentle. He reaches out and holds the boy.

165 **STEVE.** What do you mean? What are you talking about?

TOMMY. They don't want us to leave. That's why they shut everything off.

STEVE. What makes you say that? Whatever gave you that idea?

170 **WOMAN.** [*From the crowd.*] Now isn't that the craziest thing you ever heard?

DURING READING

Culture Note

Comic books and horror films of the 1950s often featured strange visitors from outer space who came to take over the world. Filmmakers used new technology and special effects to make these creatures frightening and more exciting to the audience.

TOMMY. [*Persistently but a little intimidated by the crowd.*] It's always that way, in every story I ever read
175 about a ship landing from outer space.

WOMAN. [*To the boy's mother, SALLY, who stands on the fringe of the crowd.*] From outer space, yet! Sally, you better get that boy of yours up to
180 bed. He's been reading too many comic books or seeing too many movies or something.



SALLY. Tommy, come over here and stop that kind of talk.
STEVE. Go ahead, Tommy. We'll be right back. And you'll see.
185 That wasn't any ship or anything like it. That was just a...a meteor or something. Likely as not—[*He turns to the group, now trying to weight his words with an optimism he obviously doesn't feel but is desperately trying to instill in himself as well as the others.*] No doubt it did have something to do with all this power failure and
190 the rest of it. Meteors can do some crazy things. Like sunspots.

DON. [*Picking up the cue.*] Sure. That's the kind of thing—like sunspots. They raise Cain³ with radio reception all over the world. And this thing being so close—why, there's no telling the sort of stuff it can do. [*He wets his lips, smiles nervously.*] Go
195 ahead, Charlie. You and Steve go into town and see if that isn't what's causing it all.

STEVE and CHARLIE again walk away from the group down the sidewalk. The people watch silently.

TOMMY stares at them, biting his lips, and finally calling out
200 *again.*

Think and Reflect

Sunspots are cooler regions on the sun's surface. These areas on the sun have a powerful magnetic field that often interferes with electronic devices, such as radios and television. Why does Steve suggest that the power failure is caused by sunspots?

TOMMY. Mr. Brand!

The two men stop again. TOMMY takes a step toward them.

3. **raise Cain.** Cause trouble

TOMMY. Mr. Brand...please don't leave here.

STEVE and CHARLIE stop once again and turn toward the
 205 *boy. There's a murmur in the crowd, a murmur of irritation*
and concern as if the boy were bringing up fears that shouldn't
be brought up; words which carried with them a strange kind of
validity that came without logic but nonetheless registered and
had meaning and effect. Again we hear a murmur of reaction
 210 *from the crowd.*

TOMMY is partly frightened and partly defiant as well.

TOMMY. You might not even be able to get to town. It was that way in the story. Nobody could leave. Nobody except—

STEVE. Except who?

215 **TOMMY.** Except the people they'd sent down ahead of them. They looked just like humans. And it wasn't until the ship landed that—

The boy suddenly stops again, conscious of the parents staring at them and of the sudden hush of the crowd.

220 **SALLY.** *[In a whisper, sensing the antagonism⁴ of the crowd.]*
 TOMMY, please son...honey, don't talk that way—

MAN ONE. That kid shouldn't talk that way...and we shouldn't stand here listening to him. Why this is the craziest thing I ever heard of. The kid tells us a comic book plot and
 225 here we stand listening—

STEVE walks toward the camera, stops by the boy.

STEVE. Go ahead, Tommy. What kind of story was this? What about the people that they sent out ahead?

TOMMY. That was the way they prepared things for the
 230 landing. They sent four people. A mother and a father and two kids who looked just like humans...but they weren't.

There's another silence as Steve looks toward the crowd and then toward Tommy. He wears a tight grin.

STEVE. Well, I guess what we'd better do then is to run a
 235 check on the neighborhood and see which ones of us are really human.

There's laughter at this, but it's a laughter that comes from a desperate attempt to lighten the atmosphere. It's a release kind of laugh. The people look at one another in the middle of their laughter.

240 **CHARLIE.** There must be somethin' better to do than stand around makin' bum jokes about it. *[Rubs his jaw nervously.]* I wonder if Floral Street's got the same deal we got. *[He looks past the houses.]* Where is Pete Van Horn anyway? Didn't he get back yet?

4. **antagonism.** Hostility; open opposition

Use Reading Skills

Analyze Cause and Effect

What effect do Tommy's words have on the other residents of Maple Street? Record your ideas in your cause-and-effect chart.

DURING READING

Build Vocabulary

Idiom The expression *no dice* means that something is not possible or likely to happen. Why might Goodman use the phrase instead of saying *no*?

245 Suddenly there's the sound of a car's engine starting to turn over.

We look across the street toward the driveway of LES GOODMAN's house. He's at the wheel trying to start the car.

SALLY. Can you get it started, Les? [He gets out of the car, shaking his head.]

GOODMAN. No dice.

He walks toward the group. He stops suddenly as behind him, inexplicably and with a noise that inserts itself into the silence, the car engine starts up all by itself. GOODMAN whirls around to stare toward it.

The car idles roughly, smoke coming from the exhaust, the frame shaking gently. GOODMAN's eyes go wide, and he runs over to his car.

The people stare toward the car.

260 **MAN ONE.** He got the car started somehow. He got his car started!

The camera pans along the faces of the people as they stare, somehow caught up by this revelation and somehow, illogically, wildly, frightened.

265 **WOMAN.** How come his car just up and started like that?

SALLY. All by itself. He wasn't anywheres near it. It started all by itself.

Don approaches the group, stops a few feet away to look toward Goodman's car and then back toward the group.

270 **DON.** And he never did come out to look at that thing that flew overhead. He wasn't even interested. [He turns to the faces in the group, his face taut and serious.] Why? Why didn't he come out with the rest of us to look?

CHARLIE. He always was an oddball. Him and his whole family. Real oddball.

DON. What do you say we ask him?

The group suddenly starts toward the house. In this brief fraction of a moment they take the first step toward performing a metamorphosis⁵ that changes people from a group into a mob. They begin to head purposefully across the street toward the house at the end. STEVE stands in front of them. For a moment their fear almost turns their walk into a wild stampede, but STEVE's voice, loud, incisive, and commanding, makes them stop.

285 **STEVE.** Wait a minute...wait a minute! Let's not be a mob!

5. **metamorphosis.** Change in form or nature

The people stop as a group, seem to pause for a moment, and then much more quietly and slowly start to walk across the street. GOODMAN stands alone facing the people.

GOODMAN. I just don't understand it. I tried to start it and
290 it wouldn't start. You saw me. All of you saw me.

And now, just as suddenly as the engine started, it stops and there's a long silence that is gradually intruded upon by the frightened murmuring of the people.

GOODMAN. I don't understand. I swear...I don't
295 understand. What's happening?

DON. Maybe you better tell us. Nothing's working on this street. Nothing. No lights, no power, no radio. [*And then meaningfully.*] Nothing except one car—yours!

The people pick this up and now their murmuring becomes
300 *a loud chant filling the air with accusations and demands for action. Two of the men pass Don and head toward GOODMAN, who backs away, backing into his car and now at bay.*

GOODMAN. Wait a minute now. You keep your distance—all of you. So I've got a car that starts by itself—well,
305 that's a freak thing, I admit it. But does that make me some kind of a criminal or something? I don't know why the car works—it just does!

This stops the crowd momentarily and now GOODMAN, still backing away, goes toward his front porch. He goes up the steps
310 *and then stops to stand facing the mob.*

We see a long shot of STEVE as he comes through the crowd.

STEVE. [*Quietly.*] We're all on a monster kick, Les. Seems that the general impression holds that maybe one family isn't what we think they are. Monsters from outer space or
315 something. Different than us. Fifth columnists⁶ from the vast beyond. [*He chuckles.*] You know anybody that might fit that description around here on Maple Street?

GOODMAN. What is this, a gag or something? This a practical joke or something?

320 *We see a close-up of the porch light as it suddenly goes out. There's a murmur from the group.*

GOODMAN. Now I suppose that's supposed to incriminate⁷ me! The light goes on and off. That really does it, doesn't it? [*He looks around the faces of the people.*] I just don't understand
325 this—[*He wets his lips, looking from face to face.*] Look, you all know me. We've lived here five years. Right in this house. We're

Build Vocabulary

A *kick* is a temporary idea or activity that someone enjoys. Why does Steve say that the neighborhood is on a monster kick?

6. **Fifth columnists.** Citizens who support the goals of an invading army

7. **incriminate.** Show proof of involvement in a crime

DURING READING

Read Aloud

Read lines 229–342 [from “Well, if that’s – from the crowd again”] aloud. What is the woman trying to say? Why does she hesitate?

Build Vocabulary

Someone who has *insomnia* has difficulty falling asleep. Why might someone with insomnia look up at the sky?

Note the Facts

How has the street changed since the afternoon when the story began?

no different from any of the rest of you! We’re no different at all. Really...this whole thing is just...just weird—

330 [WOMAN. Well, if that’s the case, Les Goodman, explain why—*[She stops suddenly, clamping her mouth shut.]*

GOODMAN. *[Softly.]* Explain what?

STEVE. *[Interjecting.]* Look, let’s forget this—

CHARLIE. *[Overlapping him.]* Go ahead, let her talk. What about it? Explain what?

335 WOMAN. *[A little reluctantly.]* Well...sometimes I go to bed late at night. A couple of times...a couple of times I’d come out on the porch and I’d see Mr. Goodman here in the wee hours of the morning standing out in front of his house... looking up at the sky. *[She looks around the circle of faces.]*

340 That’s right, looking up at the sky as if...as if he were waiting for something. *[A pause.]* As if he were looking for something.

There’s a murmur of reaction from the crowd again.]

We cut suddenly to a group shot. As GOODMAN starts toward them, they back away frightened.

345 GOODMAN. You know really...this is for laughs. You know what I’m guilty of? *[He laughs.]* I’m guilty of insomnia. Now what’s the penalty for insomnia? *[At this point the laugh, the humor, leaves his voice.]* Did you hear what I said? I said it was insomnia. *[A pause as he looks around, then shouts.]* I said it

350 was insomnia! You fools. You scared, frightened rabbits, you. You’re sick people, do you know that? You’re sick people—all of you! And you don’t even know what you’re starting because let me tell you...let me tell you—this thing you’re starting—that should frighten you. As God is my witness...you’re letting

355 something begin here that’s a nightmare!

— ACT 2 —

We see a medium shot of the GOODMAN entry hall at night. On the side table rests an unlit candle. MRS. GOODMAN walks into the scene, a glass of milk in hand. She sets the milk down on
360 *the table, lights the candle with a match from a box on the table, picks up the glass of milk, and starts out of scene.*

MRS. GOODMAN comes through her porch door, glass of milk in hand. The entry hall, with table and lit candle, can be seen behind her.

365 *Outside, the camera slowly pans down the sidewalk, taking in little knots of people who stand around talking in low voices. At the end of each conversation they look toward LES GOODMAN’S house. From the various houses we can see candlelight but no electricity, and there’s an all-pervading quiet that blankets the*

370 *whole area, disturbed only by the almost whispered voices of the people as they stand around. The camera pans over to one group where CHARLIE stands. He stares across at GOODMAN's house.*

We see a long shot of the house. Two men stand across the street in almost sentry-like poses. Then we see a medium shot of a
375 *group of people.*

SALLY. [*A little timorously.*⁸] It just doesn't seem right, though, keeping watch on them. Why...he was right when he said he was one of our neighbors. Why, I've known Ethel Goodman ever since they moved in. We've been good friends—

380 **CHARLIE.** That don't prove a thing. Any guy who'd spend his time lookin' up at the sky early in the morning—well, there's something wrong with that kind of person. There's something that ain't legitimate. Maybe under normal circumstances we could let it go by, but these aren't normal circumstances. Why,
385 look at this street! Nothin' but candles. Why, it's like goin' back into the dark ages or somethin'!

Steve walks down the steps of his porch, walks down the street over to LES GOODMAN's house, and then stops at the foot of the steps. GOODMAN stands there, his wife behind him, very frightened.

390 **GOODMAN.** Just stay right where you are, Steve. We don't want any trouble, but this time if anybody sets foot on my porch, that's what they're going to get—trouble!

STEVE. Look Les—

GOODMAN. I've already explained to you people. I don't
395 sleep very well at night sometimes. I get up and I take a walk and I look up at the sky. I look at the stars!

MRS. GOODMAN. That's exactly what he does. Why this whole thing, it's...it's some kind of madness or something.

STEVE. [*Nods grimly.*] That's exactly what it is—some kind
400 of madness.

CHARLIE'S VOICE. [*Shrill, from across the street.*] You best watch who you're seen with, Steve! Until we get all this straightened out, you ain't exactly above suspicion yourself.

STEVE. [*Whirling around toward him.*] Or you, Charlie. Or
405 any of us, it seems. From age eight on up!

WOMAN. What I'd like to know is—what are we gonna do? Just stand around here all night?

CHARLIE. There's nothin' else we can do! [*He turns back looking toward STEVE and GOODMAN again.*] One of 'em'll tip
410 their hand.⁹ They got to.

8. **timorously.** Shyly

9. **tip their hand.** Expose themselves; accidentally reveal information

DURING READING

Note the Facts

Why does Steve want Don to keep talking?

Build Vocabulary

Something *dense* is solid and hard to move or get through. What does it mean if you call a person *dense*?

STEVE. [*Raising his voice.*] There's something you can do, Charlie. You could go home and keep your mouth shut. You could quit strutting around like a self-appointed hanging judge and just climb into bed and forget it.

415 **CHARLIE.** You sound real anxious to have that happen, Steve. I think we better keep our eye on you too!

DON. [*As if he were taking the bit in his teeth, takes a hesitant step to the front.*] I think everything might as well come out now. [*He turns toward STEVE.*] Your wife's done plenty of
420 talking, Steve, about how odd you are!

CHARLIE. [*Picking this up, his eyes widening.*] Go ahead, tell us what she's said.

We see a long shot of STEVE as he walks toward them from across the street.

425 **STEVE.** Go ahead, what's my wife said? Let's get it all out. Let's pick out every idiosyncrasy¹⁰ of every single man, woman, and child on the street. And then we might as well set up some kind of kangaroo court.¹¹ How about a firing squad at dawn, Charlie, so we can get rid of all the suspects? Narrow them
430 down. Make it easier for you.

DON. There's no need gettin' so upset, Steve. It's just that... well...Myra's talked about how there's been plenty of nights you spent hours down in your basement workin' on some kind of radio or something. Well, none of us have ever seen that radio—

435 *By this time STEVE has reached the group. He stands there defiantly close to them.*

CHARLIE. Go ahead, Steve. What kind of "radio set" you workin' on? I never seen it. Neither has anyone else. Who you talk to on that radio set? And who talks to you?

440 **STEVE.** I'm surprised at you, Charlie. How come you're so dense all of a sudden? [*A pause.*] Who do I talk to? I talk to monsters from outer space. I talk to three-headed green men who fly over here in what look like meteors.

445 *STEVE's wife steps down from the porch, bites her lip, calls out.*

MRS. BRAND. Steve! Steve, please. [*Then looking around, frightened, she walks toward the group.*] It's just a ham
450 radio¹² set, that's all. I bought him a



10. **idiosyncrasy.** Odd character trait

11. **kangaroo court.** Unjust or unofficial court

12. **ham radio.** Noncommercial two-way radio

book on it myself. It's just a ham radio set. A lot of people have them. I can show it to you. It's right down in the basement.

STEVE. [*Whirls around toward her.*] Show them nothing! If they want to look inside our house—let them get a search
455 warrant.

CHARLIE. Look, buddy, you can't afford to—

STEVE. [*Interrupting.*] Charlie, don't tell me what I can afford! And stop telling me who's dangerous and who isn't and who's safe and who's a menace. [*He turns to the group and shouts.*] And
460 you're with him, too—all of you! You're standing here all set to crucify—all set to find a scapegoat¹³—all desperate to point some kind of a finger at a neighbor! Well now look, friends, the only thing that's gonna happen is that we'll eat each other up alive—

He stops abruptly as CHARLIE suddenly grabs his arm.

CHARLIE. [*In a hushed voice.*] That's not the only thing that can happen to us.

Cut to a long shot looking down the street. A figure has suddenly materialized in the gloom and in the silence we can hear the clickety-clack of slow, measured footsteps on concrete
470 *as the figure walks slowly toward them. One of the women lets out a stifled cry. The young mother grabs her boy as do a couple of others.*

TOMMY. [*Shouting, frightened.*] It's the monster! It's the monster!

475 *Another woman lets out a wail and the people fall back in a group, staring toward the darkness and the approaching figure.*

We see a medium group shot of the people as they stand in the shadows watching. DON MARTIN joins them, carrying a shotgun. He holds it up.

480 **DON.** We may need this.

STEVE. A shotgun? [*He pulls it out of DON's hand.*] Good Lord—will anybody think a thought around here? Will you people wise up? What good would a shotgun do against—

Now Charlie pulls the gun from Steve's hand.

485 **CHARLIE.** No more talk, Steve. You're going to talk us into a grave! You'd let whatever's out there walk right over us, wouldn't yuh? Well, some of us won't!

He swings the gun around to point it toward the sidewalk. The dark figure continues to walk toward them.

490 *The group stands there, fearful, apprehensive, mothers clutching children, men standing in front of wives. CHARLIE slowly raises the gun. As the figure gets closer and closer he*

13. **scapegoat.** Person, group, or thing that is unfairly blamed

Build Vocabulary

Idiom Charlie says that Steve will *talk them into the grave* when they see the figure coming down the street. What does he mean?

DURING READING

suddenly pulls the trigger. The sound of it explodes in the stillness. There is a long angle shot looking down at the figure, 495 who suddenly lets out a small cry, stumbles forward onto his knees and then falls forward on his face. DON, CHARLIE, and STEVE race forward over to him. STEVE is there first and turns the man over. Now the crowd gathers around them.

Think and Reflect

Were you surprised that Charlie shoots the gun? Why or why not?

500 **STEVE.** [*Slowly looks up.*] It's Pete Van Horn.

DON. [*In a hushed voice.*] Pete Van Horn! He was just gonna go over to the next block to see if the power was on—

WOMAN. You killed him, Charlie. You shot him dead!

CHARLIE. [*Looks around at the circle of faces, his eyes* 505 *frightened, his face contorted.*] But...but I didn't know who he was. I certainly didn't know who he was. He comes walkin' out of the darkness—how am I supposed to know who he was? [*He grabs STEVE.*] Steve—you know why I shot! How was I supposed to know he wasn't a monster or something? [*He grabs* 510 *DON now.*] We're all scared of the same thing. I was just tryin' to...tryin' to protect my home, that's all! Look, all of you, that's all I was tryin' to do. [*He looks down wildly at the body.*] I didn't know it was somebody we knew! I didn't know—

There's a sudden hush and then an intake of breath. We see a 515 *medium shot of the living room window of CHARLIE's house. The window is not lit, but suddenly the house lights come on behind it.*

WOMAN. [*In a very hushed voice.*] Charlie...Charlie...the lights just went on in your house. Why did the lights just go on?

DON. What about it, Charlie? How come you're the only 520 one with lights now?

GOODMAN. That's what I'd like to know. [*A pause as they all stare toward CHARLIE.*]

GOODMAN. You were so quick to kill, Charlie, and you were so quick to tell us who we had to be careful of. Well, maybe you 525 had to kill. Maybe Peter there was trying to tell us something. Maybe he'd found out something and came back to tell us who there was amongst us we should watch out for—Charlie *backs away from the group, his eyes wide with fright.*

CHARLIE. No...no...it's nothing of the sort! I don't know 530 why the lights are on. I swear I don't. Somebody's pulling a gag or something.

Build Vocabulary

Idiom When someone *pulls a gag*, it means the person is playing a practical joke. Why would Charlie suggest that someone might be pulling a gag?

He bumps against STEVE, who grabs him and whirls him around.

STEVE. A gag? A gag? Charlie, there's a dead man on the
535 sidewalk and you killed him! Does this thing look like a gag to you?

CHARLIE breaks away and screams as he runs toward his house.

CHARLIE. No! No! Please!

A man breaks away from the crowd to chase CHARLIE.

540 *We see a long angle shot looking down as the man tackles CHARLIE and lands on top of him. The other people start to run toward them. CHARLIE is up on his feet, breaks away from the other man's grasp, lands a couple of desperate punches that push the man aside. Then he forces his way, fighting, through the*
545 *crowd to once again break free, jumps up on his front porch. A rock thrown from the group smashes a window alongside of him, the broken glass flying past him. A couple of pieces cut him. He stands there perspiring, ruffled, blood running down from a cut on the cheek. His wife breaks away from the group to throw*
550 *herself into his arms. He buries his face against her. We can see the crowd converging on the porch now.*

Voices.

It must have been him.

He's the one.

555 We got to get Charlie.

Another rock lands on the porch. Now CHARLIE pushes his wife behind him, facing the group.

CHARLIE. Look, look I swear to you...it isn't me...but I do know who it is...I swear to you, I do know who it is. I know
560 who the monster is here. I know who it is that doesn't belong. I swear to you I know.

GOODMAN. [Shouting.] What are you waiting for?

WOMAN. [Shouting.] Come on, Charlie, come on.

MAN ONE. [Shouting.] Who is it, Charlie, tell us!

565 **DON.** [Pushing his way to the front of the crowd.] All right, Charlie, let's hear it!

CHARLIE's eyes dart around wildly.

CHARLIE. It's...it's...

MAN TWO. [Screaming.] Go ahead, Charlie, tell us.

570 **CHARLIE.** It's...it's the kid. It's Tommy. He's the one!

There's a gasp from the crowd as we cut to a shot of SALLY holding her son TOMMY. The boy at first doesn't understand and then, realizing the eyes are all on him, buries his face against his mother.

Note the Facts

According to Charlie, who is responsible for their problems?

575 **SALLY.** [*Backs away.*] That's crazy! That's crazy! He's a little boy.

WOMAN. But he knew! He was the only one who knew! He told us all about it. Well, how did he know? How could he have known?

580 *The various people take this up and repeat the question aloud.*

Voices.

How could he know?

Who told him?

Make the kid answer.

585 **DON.** It was Charlie who killed old man Van Horn.

WOMAN. But it was the kid here who knew what was going to happen all the time. He was the one who knew!

We see a close-up of STEVE.

STEVE. Are you all gone crazy? [*Pause as he looks about.*] Stop.

590 *A fist crashes at STEVE's face, staggering him back out of the frame of the picture.*

There are several close camera shots suggesting the coming of violence. A hand fires a rifle. A fist clenches. A hand grabs the hammer from VAN HORN's body, etc. Meanwhile, we hear the

595 *following lines.*

DON. Charlie has to be the one—Where's my rifle—

WOMAN. Les Goodman's the one. His car started! Let's wreck it.

MRS. GOODMAN. What about Steve's radio—He's the one
600 that called them—

MRS. GOODMAN. Smash the radio. Get me a hammer. Get me something.

STEVE. Stop—Stop—

CHARLIE. Where's that kid—Let's get him.

605 **MAN ONE.** Get Steve—Get Charlie—They're working together.

The crowd starts to converge around the mother, who grabs the child and starts to run with him. The crowd starts to follow, at first walking fast,
610 *and then running after him.*

We see a full shot of the street as suddenly CHARLIE's lights go off and the lights in another house go on. They stay on for a moment, then from across the street

615 *other lights go on and then off again.*

MAN ONE. [*Shouting.*] It isn't the kid...it's Bob Weaver's house.



WOMAN. It isn't Bob Weaver's house. It's Don Martin's place.

CHARLIE. I tell you it's the kid.

620 **DON.** It's Charlie. He's the one.

Think and Reflect

Who or what are the monsters on Maple Street?

We move into a series of close-ups of various people as they shout, accuse, scream, interspersing these shots with shots of houses as the lights go on and off, and then slowly in the middle of this nightmarish morass¹⁴ of sight and sound the camera starts
 625 *to pull away, until once again we've reached the opening shot looking at the Maple Street sign from high above.*

The camera continues to move away until we dissolve to a shot looking toward the metal side of a space craft, which sits shrouded in darkness. An open door throws out a beam of light
 630 *from the illuminated interior. Two figures silhouetted against the bright lights appear. We get only a vague feeling of form, but nothing more explicit than that.*

FIGURE ONE. Understand the procedure now? Just stop a few of their machines and radios and telephones and lawn
 635 mowers...throw them into darkness for a few hours, and then you just sit back and watch the pattern.

FIGURE TWO. And this pattern is always the same?

FIGURE ONE. With few variations. They pick the most dangerous enemy they can find...and it's themselves. And all
 640 we need do is sit back...and watch.

FIGURE TWO. Then I take it this place...this Maple Street...is not unique.

FIGURE ONE. [*Shaking his head.*] By no means. Their world is full of Maple Streets. And we'll go from one to the
 645 other and let them destroy themselves. One to the other...one to the other...one to the other—

Now the camera pans up for a shot of the starry sky and over this we hear the NARRATOR'S VOICE.

NARRATOR'S VOICE. The tools of conquest do not neces-
 650 sarily come with bombs and explosions and fallout. There are weapons that are simply thoughts, attitudes, prejudices—to be found only in the minds of men. For the record, prejudices

Build Vocabulary

Silhouettes are shadowy shapes that make it difficult to make out distinct features. Why might the two figures be silhouetted?

14. **morass.** Complicated or bewildering situation

DURING READING

can kill and suspicion can destroy and a thoughtless frightened search for a scapegoat has a fallout all its own for the
655 children...and the children yet unborn. [A pause.] And the pity of it is...that these things cannot be confined to...The Twilight Zone! ♣



What would you do if you were a resident of Maple Street? Would it be fair to blame your neighbors for what is going on?

READING CHECK

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

- What happens when the flash of light passes over Maple Street?
 - All of the electronics stop working.
 - Strangers from out of town arrive in town.
 - Everyone looks for visitors from outer space.
- Who is the first person to say that the blackout is caused by people from outer space?
 - Tommy
 - Steve
 - Charlie
- What happens when Goodman's car starts up by itself?
 - He uses it to get out of town as quickly as possible.
 - People accuse him of being responsible for the blackout.
 - They use the car's power to turn on the street's electricity.
- Why does Charlie shoot Pete Van Horn?
 - He doesn't recognize Pete in the shadows.
 - He thinks Pete is trying to escape.
 - He hears an odd sound that frightens him.
- Who is responsible for the strange events on Maple Street?
 - Tommy
 - the two figures
 - the new neighbors

VOCABULARY CHECK

Circle the letter of the correct answer.

- The *nebulae* are full of stars starting to form. What are *nebulae*?
 - small stars
 - clouds of dust
 - other dimensions
- The neighbors undergo a *metamorphosis*, and friends become foes. A *metamorphosis* is a
 - game in which people take sides.
 - change from one thing to another.
 - group activity in which people talk together.
- Ike *knits his brows* whenever he has trouble solving his math homework. This means he is
 - confused or thinking hard.
 - unhappy to be working on the problems.
 - ready to start on his other homework soon.
- The extra credit is a *bum joke*, because it is even harder than the rest of the test. A *bum joke* is something that is
 - usually funny to people.
 - funny only if others tell it.
 - hardly ever really funny.
- The people in the crowd want a *scapegoat* for their problems. What does this mean?
 - They want to see if others have trouble, too.
 - They want to work everything out together.
 - They want to find someone they can blame.

ANALYZE LITERATURE: Diction

The author's choice of words and expressions is called **diction**. The diction of a piece can make it sound formal or informal, modern or old-fashioned, and so on. What are some of the words or phrases that make up the diction in "The Monsters Are Due on Maple Street"?

USE READING SKILLS: Cause and Effect

Review the cause-and-effect chart you filled in while reading this story. What are some of the causes? What are the effects of those causes?

BUILD VOCABULARY

Use context clues from each sentence to create definitions for each italicized word or phrase.

- 1. The strange flash of light was *too close for their money*, leaving the residents of Maple Street alarmed and uncomfortable.

- 2. Sally and Tommy stood on the *fringe* of the crowd, toward the back.

- 3. There was *no telling* when everything would turn back on again.

- 4. People started accusing others of being *oddballs* with strange habits.

- 5. The crowd *converged* on Charlie, surrounding him.

WRITING SKILLS

Think about what would happen if the two figures went down and visited Maple Street. How would they act? How would the residents of Maple Street react to their arrival? Write a short screenplay to describe the scene the way you think it would happen.